



WEST HILLS CHURCH STEWARDSHIP 2017

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.

1 Peter 4:10

After a rain storm one day the pastor of a local church received some bad news. The roof of the church was leaking and needed to be repaired. The repairs were going to cost \$50,000 and the church only had \$10,000 in their reserve account. Thus, the pastor was trying to come up with some creative ideas to raise money for the repairs.

The next Sunday morning he came up with an idea. He decided that whoever pledged the most to the cost of the roof repairs would get to choose the hymns for the service on Sunday morning. Before the service started he informed the congregation of the roof leak and of his idea that the person who pledged the most money toward the cost of the repairs would get to choose the hymns for the day's worship service.

People started shouting out their pledges and the pledges kept getting higher and higher. Finally, a voice from the back of the sanctuary proclaimed \$5,000! Everyone turned around to see 90-year-old Claire Smith smiling after her bid. No one else outbid her and so the pastor invited her to come forward.

Claire Smith, with her cane, walked up to the front of the sanctuary and stood next to the pastor, facing the congregation. The pastor thanked her for her pledge and then told her that she could pick any four hymns that she wanted. Claire looked out over the congregation and then, pointing with her index finger on her right hand said, "I choose him, and him, and him and him.

Maybe I am wrong but I believe that Jesus would have liked that joke. It is not that Jesus thought money was not a serious matter, in fact, except for the "Kingdom of God," Jesus taught most frequently about the topic of money. However, I do not believe that Jesus wanted money to take away our sense of humor or our joy of giving.

The Bible has much to say about money, where it comes from and what we should do with money. This devotional booklet is designed for us to examine some of the Bible's teachings on money and on Stewardship. My hope is that as you go through these short devotions and pray, that God will reveal to you what it would look like to use your gifts to serve others and to give joyfully.

Most of the devotions ask you to read a short scripture passage, answer some questions and pray. However, other devotions will require just a bit more of your time. The first devotional will ask you to compile a list of all the blessings that God has given to you. On this day I encourage you to gather your family together and do this as a family exercise.

The devotion on **Saturday, November 5th** will ask you to watch the movie, Pay It Forward, and reflect on what the movie has to teach us on giving. Finally, I am asking all people to try and take part in a local mission project on or before **November 12th, 2016** and then reflect on what that project taught you or your family about giving.

My hope is that this devotional will be a help and a guide for you as you prayerfully discern what God is calling you to give back to Him through West Hills Church in 2017.

Derek

Monday – October 31, 2016

Open your devotional time with prayer. Ask the Lord for guidance and understanding as you read his word.

Read Psalm 24:1 & James 1:17

1. How are these two passages of scripture similar? What is the main point of these passages?
2. Do you think that most people truly believe that all that we have comes from God? Do you?
3. If we really believed that everything came from God; how would this change our life and our attitude toward possessions?
4. What do these two passages tell us about giving back to God?
5. Take a few moments and make a list of “every good and perfect gift,” that God has given to you; in other words a thankful list. Take a few moments and do the same exercise with your family.
6. Close in prayer; thanking God for all he has given you.

Tuesday – November 1, 2016

Open with a prayer asking God to reveal his truth to you.

Read 1 Peter 4:10

1. What do you find important, intriguing or interesting in this Bible verse?
2. The verse indicates that we have received gifts. What gift or gifts have you received and who has given us these gifts?
3. How are you using your gifts to serve others?
4. When we use our gifts to serve others what does this passage call us?
5. Have you been a faithful steward? How might you take another step in being a more faithful steward?
6. Close in prayer and ask God to reveal to you how you might be a more faithful steward.

Thursday – November 3, 2016

Open in prayer by asking God to bless your reading of the scripture and then sit in silence for one minute.

Read Haggai 1: 3 - 11

1. In the Bible, prophets often warned people to correct their ways and turn back to God. In this passage how is the prophet Haggai warning the people? What are they doing wrong? What are they supposed to do to correct or change their behavior?

2. How does this passage from Haggai apply to the Church in the Twenty-First Century?

3. What do you think the prophet Haggai would say to you about your giving?

4. Pray and ask God to help you give careful thought to how you give.

Friday – November 4, 2016

As you open in prayer for this devotion, ask God to let the words of Jesus penetrate your heart and soul.

Read Matthew 6: 19 - 24

1. How are you storing up for yourself treasures on earth?
How are you storing up for yourself treasures in heaven?
What does this mean?

2. Jesus says that we cannot “serve both God and money,” what does he mean by this? How do you serve money? How do you serve God?

3. What in this passage of scripture challenges you the most? Why? How will this passage change your view of money and giving?

4. Pray and ask God to help you store treasures in heaven.

Saturday – November 5, 2016

Open in prayer and thank God for this day and for his word.

Read Malachi 3: 6 - 10.

1. What words are used for giving in this passage?

2. How is a tithe different than an offering? Are we called to tithe to God through the church?

3. What promise does God give us through the prophet Malachi in verse 10 of this passage? Does this change your mind about tithing?

4. Close in prayer and thank God for all that you have.

Watch the movie Pay It Forward with your friends and family. What does this movie tell us about the power of giving?

Sunday – November 6, 2016

Each Sunday is supposed to remind us of the first Resurrection Sunday. As you pray today, thank God for the truth of the Resurrection.

Read Leviticus 27: 30 - 32

1. How does this passage of scripture define a tithe?

2. The passage yesterday from Malachi called on us to tithe. This passage defines a tithe as 10% of our income. If we are called to tithe it means that we are called to give 10%. How does this strike you? Is it intimidating, scary or do you look forward to tithing joyfully?

3. How do you feel after reading this passage? Does the promise of Malachi 3:10 help you when you think about tithing?

4. Pray and thank God for the opportunity that you have to give.

Monday – November 7, 2016

Open in prayer, thanking God for a new week and for his Holy Word.

Read Mark 12: 41 – 44

1. Why does Jesus praise the woman in this passage?
2. Why did she give all she had to live on?
3. What does it mean to give out of wealth? What does it mean to give out of poverty?
4. How does this passage of scripture challenge you? How does it apply to our attitudes of giving today?
5. Close in prayer and ask God to show you what it means for us to give out of poverty. Just sit in silence for a minute and allow God to speak to you about this matter.

Tuesday – November 8, 2016

Open in prayer and ask God to reveal his truth to you.

Read 1 Timothy 6: 6 – 10; 17 – 19

1. Why is the “love of money,” the root of all kinds of evil? Do you love money?

2. What commands are given to the rich in verses 17 – 19?

3. How do verses 17 – 19 speak to you?

4. How do these verses in 1 Timothy change the way you think about giving to the church?

5. Pray and ask God to protect you from the “love of money.”

Wednesday – November 9, 2016

Open in prayer and ask God to make the scripture a light unto your path.

Read Matthew 6: 1 – 4

1. What does Jesus say about what our attitude should be when we give?

2. Why do you think he gives these instructions?

3. How does your attitude toward giving compare and contrast with the attitude that Jesus talks about in this passage?

4. Pray and ask God to continue to develop within you the attitude described in Matthew 6: 1- 4.

Saturday – November 12, 2016

Have you taken part in a service project yet? Open your time in prayer and ask God to speak to you clearly through the scripture you are about to read.

Read 2 Corinthians 9: 6 – 11

1. In your opinion what does verse six mean?

2. What does verse seven say about giving? Do you ever feel compelled to give? Why would God not want us to give reluctantly or under compulsion?

3. Are you a cheerful giver? What makes someone a cheerful giver?

4. What promise is contained in these scripture verses regarding giving? How does this promise encourage giving?

5. Close in prayer and ask God to help you become a cheerful giver.

Notes

